

## **Historic, archived document**

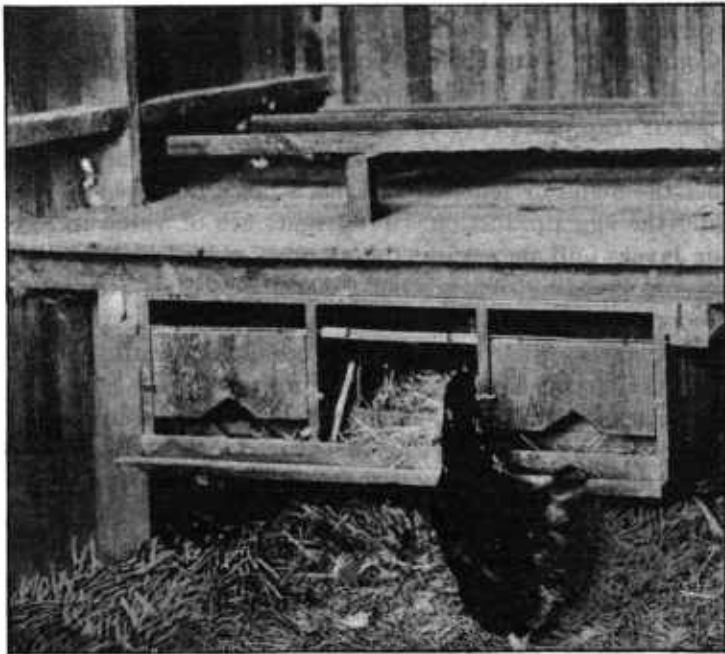
Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

*file city. all he*

# A SIMPLE TRAP NEST FOR POULTRY

ALFRED R. LEE

Poultryman, Animal Husbandry Division



FARMERS' BULLETIN 682  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Contribution from the Bureau of Animal Industry  
JOHN R. MOHLER, Chief

Washington, D. C.

Issued July 9, 1915; revised November, 1919

# A SIMPLE TRAP NEST FOR POULTRY

## WHAT THE TRAP NEST IS

**A** TRAP NEST is a laying nest so arranged that after a hen enters it she is confined until released by the attendant. The trap nest shown in the accompanying illustrations is used with good results on the Government poultry farm, and is quite similar to the nest used at the Connecticut State Experiment Station. It is very simple and may be built readily by anyone who is handy with tools.

The use of trap nests is essential in breeding poultry for both egg production and exhibition, where pedigree records are used in selecting either the males or females, and has a place in mass selection for increasing the egg production. Trap nests are of value in weeding out poor layers and increasing the average egg yield of a flock by selecting and breeding, but are not generally used on account of the large amount of labor required to operate them. They have a place on breeding farms where they can be used in selecting the better layers and the stock and eggs for breeding purposes. Some poultry breeders trap-nest their pullets during their first six months of laying and use this as a basis in selecting their breeders for egg production.

One trap nest should be provided for each four hens kept in flocks of 50 or more, while more trap nests per hen are necessary in smaller flocks. The hens are banded with numbered bands, and a record is kept of their egg production. The nests should be visited at least four times daily, and preferably much more often, frequent trips being especially necessary when the hens are laying freely and during hot weather.

This trap nest may be attached to the underside of the dropping board, with the front facing the pen and arranged so that it can be easily removed, or it may be placed on the walls of the pen. If the nest is placed under the dropping board, the latter will serve as a top for the nest, and the rear of the nest may be of wire to allow good ventilation in warm weather. If the nest is placed on the wall, slats or wire should be inserted from the front of the nest to the wall at a sharp angle to prevent the hens from roosting on the nest.

When the hen enters this nest her back raises the door (*c*) (fig. 2), which releases the catch or trigger (*a*) and allows the door to shut. The catch should be set so that its edge just holds the door, which position is regulated by the screw or nail at the lower inside edge of the catch. Washers should be placed on the screw (*d*) on both sides of the catch or trigger to prevent it from sticking. The guard (*b*) around the catch keeps the nesting material away from the catch.

The length of the catch which supports the door and the triangular notch in the door may be varied slightly for very small or very large hens if this is found necessary.

### CONSTRUCTING A THREE-COMPARTMENT NEST

Cut four  $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch boards for ends and partitions, 12 inches wide by  $18\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, enough  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch boards  $39\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, laid lengthwise, to cover the top, back, and bottom, and two strips  $39\frac{1}{2}$  inches long and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide for the front of the nests and for the front extended rail. Cut three pieces of  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch boards 12 inches long and 3 inches high to insert in the nest to hold the nesting material away from the door. The total quantity of material needed will be one  $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch board, 12 inches wide by 8 feet 2 inches long for the ends,

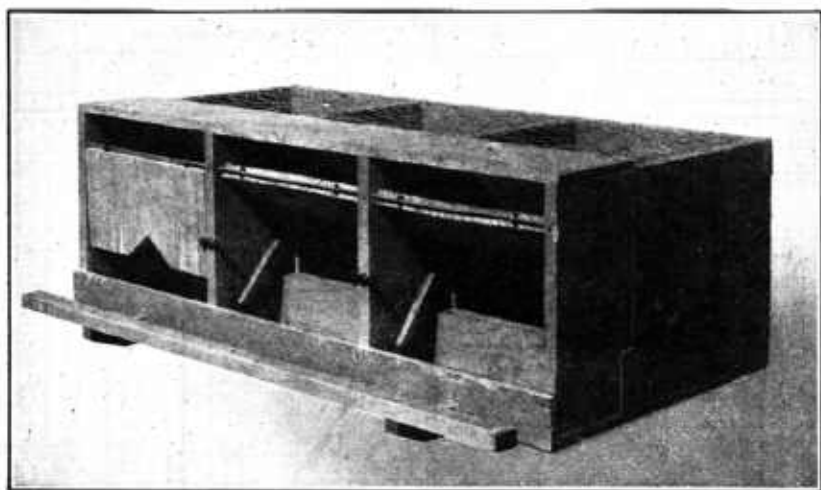


FIG. 1.—A three-compartment trap nest. Two of the doors are shown open and one closed

partitions, and front of the nest; and two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch boards 10 inches wide and 10 feet long for the top, back, bottom, and front rail of the nest. If wire is used on top of the nest an equal number of square feet of  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch lumber can be subtracted from the amount stated.

Nail the top, back, and bottom to the ends and partitions (see fig. 2), insert the 3-inch strips in the nests, and make the guard (*b*), nailing it to the left side of the nest. Bore a hole in the catch (*a*) large enough so that the catch will move freely when screwed into position on the side, and use a washer on both sides of the catch. The catch should be made of hardwood, so that it will not wear readily around the screw which holds it in place. The catch is made of material  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick and is  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide at the upper end and  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch wide at the lower end. Place a screw at the lower edge of the catch to stop it when set, so that the catch will just hold the door.

Make the doors (*c*) of  $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch material, 12 inches by 6 inches, and cut a triangular notch in the center 4 inches wide. Put two screw eyes in the top of the doors and bore holes in the front of the nests 2 inches below the top (inside measurement), through which a  $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch wire is run to support the doors.

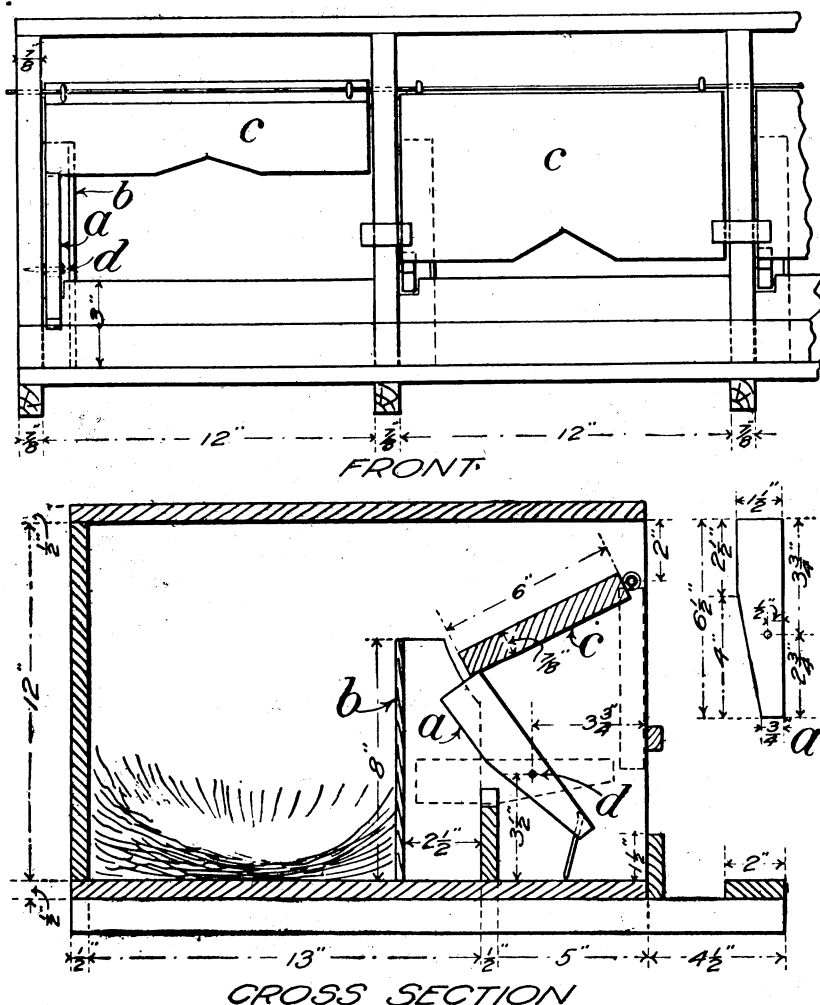


FIG. 2.—Details of construction of trap nest

Attach a narrow strip to the front of the nests for the hens to jump upon when entering the nests. Place a button or block of wood on the front of each partition to hold the door when the nest is closed.

If the nests are to be placed directly below the dropping boards, a wire top should be used on the nest, except for a 5-inch strip of wood on the front edge of the top to stiffen the nest.